



Role Play Situation #1

Giving Advice

- T: Boy, am I glad to get some time with you. I'm really desperate.
- C: What seems to be the trouble?
- T: Well, really what isn't the trouble? I have this pupil named Sonny and ever since September, he's been a problem. He doesn't do anything, just wanders around getting into other people's things and no matter how much time I've spent with him, it's always the same the next day.
- C: What have you tried so far?
- T: Well, as I just said, I've talked with him after school, I've talked with his parents, I've warned him that he wouldn't pass into the fifth grade next year, I've told him that his wandering makes me angry---I've tried about everything.
- C: Has anything worked?
- T: Not really. Sometimes there's a little improvement for a day or so but then he's back into his routine. Would you believe that I even sat with him for ten minutes each day to see if that would help? ---and me with 33 other children in the room!
- C: How did that work?
- T: Well, as long as I would sit there with him, practically doing his work for him he would at least look at his work sheet. But the moment I left, he stopped working. I just don't know what to do.
- C: Well, it sounds to me as though what he needs is more individual attention. What I'm going to suggest is probably going to take more time but I think it may be worth it. Why not meet with Sonny a few minutes before school each morning and go over the day's assignment for each subject, just to make sure he understands what to do. Once that is done Sonny, wouldn't have any excuse for not doing his work, right? As it is, he complains that he doesn't understand the assignment and this way, he'll have already covered what he's supposed to do during the day.
- T: You know that may be a good idea, but as the moment I use all my time before class getting things ready for the day's activities so taking ten to fifteen minutes for Sonny wouldn't work.
- C: I know it's hard to find the time. Maybe you could just see him for a few minutes to go over the assignments?
- T: Well I could afford a few minutes but then I don't think he would really understand the assignments. I mean after all, I've worked a lot with him and I know how long it takes Sonny to understand anything!



Role Play Situation #2

Identifying the Problem

Jane Smith, principal of ABCD School, scheduled several observations of Mr. Bill's third grade classroom. Comments overheard in the faculty room and from several of Mr. Bill's parents confirmed the fact that this was a difficult year for the teacher. On two of her last three observations, Ms. Smith was shocked by observing students talking back to their teacher and on one occasion by a pupil demonstrating a fairly realistic mime of his behavior. Sensing the stress under which Mr. Bill was working, Jane Smith came to the decision that one of his more troublemakers would have to be transferred to the other third grade class.

Although, the next week seemed to go more smoothly for the class, Ms. Smith experienced a moment's doubt when a note left on her desk by Mr. Bill urgently requested another "observation." Though a few details were noted, the name Harold was underlined as someone to be watched during her next visit.

Sitting in the classroom the next day, her worst fears were confirmed; the class had again deteriorated to its prior level of disturbance. In place of Timmy, who was removed the previous week, Harold occupied center stage. Although her first reaction was to consider another transfer, Ms. Smith stopped to notice what was happening in the interaction between Harold and Mr. Bill. First she noted that his eyes seldom left Harold even though his head was orientated toward other children. Other clues began to fit into place which together formed the picture of Mr. Bill giving nearly continuous attention to those pupils who were out of their seats or looking about the room. Working pupils received little of no attention whatsoever. It was time for a chat with Mr. Bill. Jane Smith left a note on Mr. Bill's desk suggesting a time after school when they could talk.



Role Play Situation #3

Being the Expert

- C: What seems to be the trouble May?
- T: Well, what isn't the trouble? I have this kid named Sonny and ever since September, he has been a problem. He doesn't do anything, and he just wanders around getting into other people's things: no matter how much time I've spent with him he's always the same the next day.
- C: What have you tried so far?
- T: Just as I've said, I've talked with him after school, I've talked with his parents, I've warned him that he would not pass to the fifth grade if he didn't get started working. I told him that his wandering makes me angry. I've tried just about everything.
- C: When you talked to Sonny directly, what exactly did you say?
- T: Well, I told him that he was getting further and further behind in his work and that he'd better get started working.
- C: What was his reaction to you telling him that he was way behind in his work?
- T: He was just sort of quiet. He sat there and didn't say anything. He just looked like he was going to cry.
- C: What did you do about that when you saw he was getting ready to cry?
- T: Well, I felt real bad that I made him so upset so I reassured him that all he had to do was to show me that he was trying and I would be glad to help him all I could.
- C: (Nodding)
- T: What do you think I should have done? I wanted to let him know how poorly he was doing I thought that he might not be aware of how far behind he was getting and that he might change his ways if he knew that.
- C: Sometimes it's hard to know what to do although I'm sure your reassurance that you were willing to help him made him feel better.
- T: I'm really at a loss to know what to do with Sonny. What do you think is his problem? And what can I do about it?



Role Play Situation #4

Accentuating the Positive

- C: (With a big friendly smile) So you really feel stuck on what to do with Sonny!
- T: Well I've tried just about everything I know and so far nothing works.
- C: Let's see May, how long have I known you? About five years right? And in that time, how often have you gotten stuck like this with a kid?
- T: I don't know maybe two or three times. Why?
- C: (Brightly) Well doesn't that say it all! You've had trouble maybe two or three times with a student over a five-year period. Now come on! You've got to realize that you'd have to be a supper teacher to have had that few problems.
- T: You don't understand I really need help with Sonny. He's a handful.
- C: (Nodding slowly) I know, I know. Right now it seems like the end of the world. It's nearly Christmas and you haven't found the formula yet...but look at it this way. You're a top notch teacher. Give it a little time. Either he'll change or you'll figure out what to do. Just don't worry!
- T: (Looking out the window and shaking her head) Well, thanks anyway. Maybe I just needed to talk to someone (rises and walks out of the room).



Role Play Situation #5

Sharing Successes

- C: What sort of things does Sonny do that makes it difficult for you and the other students?
- T: Oh just about everything!
- C: (Frowning) what particular things do you find really hard to deal with?
- T: The one thing I just can't stand is his going around other students that are working and picking on them. He seems to single out the ones who have trouble working and bother them. He just drives me up the wall!
- C: Sounds pretty fierce! You know I had a pupil like that once; his name was Arthur. He was a holy terror!
- T: Oh I suppose we all have hard-to-understand kids; Sonny just happens to be mine right now and I need some ideas about helping him.
- C: Let me tell you what I did with Arthur. He didn't anymore that lift himself out of his seat and I was right there! I stayed on top of him like a magnet. For about two weeks, he didn't turn around without my being right there ready to get him started back to work. He learned pretty quick that I was going to insist that he get his work done and no mistake about it.
- T: (Tactfully) I'm sure that you're following him around like that made a difference. But I just can't think that the solution is giving Sonny more of my time. I'm giving him far too much as it.